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Catalan Review is the premier international scholarly journal devoted to all aspects of Catalan culture. By Catalan culture is understood all manifestations of intellectual and artistic life produced in the Catalan language or in the geographical areas where Catalan is spoken. Catalan Review has been in publication since 1986.

Catalan Review és la primera revista internacional dedicada a tots els aspectes de la cultura catalana. Per la cultura catalana s'entén totes les manifestacions de la vida intel·lectual i artística produïda en llengua catalana o en les zones geogràfiques on es parla català. Catalan Review es publica des de 1986.

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**Catalan Review, Vol. XIX, (2005), p. 317-332**

## REVIEWS



For the Catalan reader, the idea that Lull could have had some influence on one of the greatest of English poets is intriguing. Moreover, since he lived (1572-1631) at a time when Lullism of all sorts—including pseudo-Lullian alchemy and kabbalah were having a considerable vogue in Northern Europe, such an influence is not at all unlikely. My interest was further spurred by a fascinating fact uncovered by the author. On the first page of her preface we find out that:

Though many Renaissance readers appropriated Lull's theory of *ars combinatoria* from secondary sources, we know that Donne himself studied the original. His personal copy of *Duodecim Principia Philosophiae* (1516) bears his pencil markings in the margins, a sign of his careful attention. His knowledge of cabalistic investigative practices, which had also influenced Lull, was supplemented by other pseudo-Lullian sources such as *De auditu kabbalistico*, familiar to all Renaissance Lullists.

That Donne owned this work and seems to have studied it with care, is indeed a matter of interest. But this information is accompanied by some disquieting bits. First of all, what is the *ars combinatoria* doing here? The *Duodecim Principia Philosophiae*, or by its better known title, *Liber lamentationis Philosophiae*, is a work purely philosophical and theological in content, presented in a literary form (in the sense that Philosophy, Form, Matter, etc., are personified and give their various points of view in extended speeches). Not a single element of the *ars combinatoria* is presented or even implied in this work.

Then the Kabbalah is brought in, through the "*De auditu kabbalistico*, familiar to all Renaissance Lullists". What has this got to do with Donne? Is there any evidence that he owned or even knew the work? None is presented by the author. And to talk about "cabalistic investigative practices, which had also influenced Lull" is quite misleading. So in one short introductory paragraph Donne, Lull, the *ars combinatoria*, and the Kabbalah have been connected, all on the basis of surmise or misinformation.

The author's statement about Donne's ownership of the 1516 volume comes from Geoffrey Keynes, *A bibliography of Dr. John Donne* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973; 4th ed.), who says, curiously enough (p. 263), that "The great majority of Donne's books are concerned with theological controversy," which, of course, fits in much better with the real content of the work in question, and might have been a matter well worth studying. By contrast, the more esoteric side of Donne, which is what seems to interest Albrecht, is almost totally absent from Keynes's list.

As an example of further wanderings on the author's part, on p. 27 we read (the emphases are hers):

In opposition to Dominican concepts of memory (based upon Thomistic sense-oriented images), Lull's system of memory was based upon names (signifying abstract things that cannot be pictured in corporeal form).

Among these names are those of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit. [...] As corporeal similitude, the Virgin Mary had no part in Lull's own *Liber ad memoriam confirmandam*, where repetition was the main rule. However, as *one of the attributes of God*, her importance was great indeed. Some Renaissance readers, confronted by such images as this below, understood, even in the pseudo-Lullian sense, the abstract principle of Mary as attribute of God.

This description of Dominican mnemotechnics is new to me (I say this because I am cited as justification in a note), and the idea that Lull was proposing a memory system is based on an unfortunate assertion of Frances Yates in her otherwise admirable and path-breaking Lullian researches. Furthermore, if Albrecht had consulted recent bibliography or looked the work up on <http://orbita.bib.ub.es/llull/>, she would have seen that some twenty years ago it was shown that the *Liber ad memoriam confirmandam* is not by Lull. And finally, what on earth is the meaning of "the abstract principle of Mary as attribute of God"? Once again we have connections on unjustifiable bases, this time between Lull, mnemotechnics, the Principles of Lull's Art, the attributes of God, and the Virgin Mary.

One more example (p. 84) of the broad brush of hypothesis should suffice:

If indeed Donne traveled in Spain, we can be sure that he heard of the famous legend of Ramon Lull (1232-1316?), and, possibly, of certain aspects of Lull's "spiritual logic." We know that Philip II (who reigned 1556-98) was a great admirer of Lull. Certainly the king's ardent Lullism would have been felt among his people.

Note the "if", "possibly", "certainly", all of which are problematical (and in fact, nothing could be less "certain" than the last assertion). This whole hypothetical passage was brought about by another possibility: that it was on this trip that Donne "may also have procured his personal copy of Lull's *Duodecim Principia Philosophiae*". The fact that this edition had been published seventy years before in Paris, and that by Donne's time Lull was better known in northern Europe than in Spain, makes this whole excursus quite beside the point.

Finally, Albrecht claims (p. 204) that Mark Johnston's book, *The Spiritual Logic of Ramon Lull*, "says that Lull's *Principia*, which Donne owned, 'posits nine Relative *Principia* by means of which the Dignities communicate their nature...'. If we look at the cited page of Johnston (p. 19) we find that he is referring to the principles of Lull's Art, and he had put the word in Italics because it was a Latin term, not because it was the title of a work. So to say that Donne owned it (or them) is absurd, if not downright embarrassing.

It might seem unfair to judge a book quite wide in scope from this one angle, but the vagueness, generality, and inaccuracy of its methods make one disinclined to investigate further.

ANTHONY BONNER  
MAIORICENSIS SCHOLA LULLISTICA

BOVER I FONT, August, ed. *Pere Serafi: Poesia escollida*. Barcelona: 62, 2005. 191 pp.

Described in older literary histories as the beginning of a period of "Decadència," the sixteenth century gave rise to a talented poet who was a painter as well. Pere Serafi, also known as "lo Grech," wrote in a great variety of styles, adopting Petrarchan sonnets and other Italian and French forms and reworking the traditional Catalan "Canço" and "Goig." In his 1987 anthology of Serafi's poems, August Bover i Font followed the order of the *Prínceps* edition, but here, he rearranges the poetry according to metric type, explaining in his introduction the characteristics and origins: A. Les formes del llegat medieval; B. Influències foranes; C. La reescriptura del cançoner popular i tradicional.

The editor's emphasis on form is a great help to the reader who wishes to study the rich texture of the poetry of this Renaissance man, contemporary of Garcilaso and Bosca. Like them, Serafi favored the Italianate forms—he translated some of Petrarch's work—not only the sonnet but also "octava rima," "tercets encadenats," and madrigals. French influence can be seen in a "dizain" and several "emblems," but Serafi was also a great admirer of Ausias March, to whom he dedicated a sonnet and whom he followed in the usage of the typical Marchian ten-syllable, eight-line verse, the "octava clàssica catalanoocitana," with or without the two-line "apariat." His cultivation of medieval forms includes a number of quartets and "cobles" of seven and nine lines, and in the popular tradition, he experiments with rhyme (including interior) and meter. For example, his well-known "Cançó LVII" laments, in a woman's voice, her solitude, in the following form: *Sí em lleví de bon matí / i aní-me'n tota soleta / i enrí-me'n dins mon jardí / —de matinet / l'aire dolcet la fa rira riré— / per collir la violeta. / Ai llasseta! Què faré / ni què diré / Val Déu que estic dolenta! / L'amor és, que em turmenta* (138). Serafi thus captures traditions with respect to theme as well as form: here, as in "Cançó LVIII" the woman's complaint of the absent lover captures the ancient troubadour "canço d'amiga," which appeared in various languages and cultures. He also recovered the practice of writing acrostic verses, and, as the well-rounded Renaissance man that he was, Serafi played several musical instruments and had some of his verses set to music.

Love themes predominate, but he also wrote religious poetry, and in addition to his compositions praising Ausias March, he wrote epitaphs and necrologies, philosophical poems, and a universal lament for times gone by, applicable to our twenty-first century, "Sàtira a la contrarietat de les temporades": *Quan pens i mir als fets del temps present / i consider aquells del que és passat, / l'entendre meu se troba regirat / com no feneix lo món sobtósament, / car hui miram que a sols qui té poder / en cantitats se fa tota honor; / lo virtuós tremola tot de por, / que no sap on puga descans haver* (35).

The bibliography to this edition is much expanded, reflecting a new interest among various scholars in this poet and period since Professor Bover i Font produced the 1987 anthology. The very useful "Glossari" also includes new entries, and Serafi's "Dedicatòria de l'Edició *Prínceps*" to Jerònim Galceran Seràpio de Sorribes, included as an appendix, requests the protection of a famous person to avoid those who "llogen més per calumniar los curiosos treballs de l'escriptor que per aprofitar-se" (185). This is a very readable text, appropriate for the classroom, as well as for general enjoyment: "delectar i

ensenyar." Bover i Font has written extensively on this fascinating poet and others of the period, thus defying the old classification of "Decadence" for this body of literature and pointing, instead, to "l'aiguabarreig d'influències i corrents que caracteritzà l'època del Renaixement" (12).

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BUTINÁ, Julia. *En los orígenes del humanismo: Bernat Metge*. Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2002. 525 pp.

El llibre que ressenyem aquí és una mena de prolongació d'un llibre anterior de Butinà (*Tras los orígenes*). Tots dos, ja des del títol, se sustenten, alhora que pretenen fixar-la, en una tesi la discussió de la qual ha inspirat no poques pàgines, sovint polèmiques, durant els darrers decennis. La tesi sosté l'existència d'un humanisme català que es defineix sòlidament i clara en els ambients i pràctiques literàries del final del tres-cents i del quatre-cents a la Corona d'Aragó. *Lo somni* de Bernat Metge serveix ara per demostrar i caracteritzar la naturalesa d'aquest humanisme català i per elucidar els seus orígens, motivacions i connexions en una lectura de dita obra i, de pas, de tota l'obra literària de Metge que situa el fill de l'apotecari reial en lloc precedent del conreu, penetració i pràctica de les idees humanístiques en les lletres ibèriques de la baixa edat mitjana. D'altra banda aquest llibre ens ofereix la culminació momentània de l'estesa trajectòria investigadora que Butinà ha dedicat a la figura de Metge i, concretament, a *Lo somni* (vid. pp. 446-47 per a la relació dels treballs que ho demostrin).

No és aquest el lloc on explorar l'abast cultural i històric de la discussió sobre l'humanisme català. Una ampla bibliografia, amb noms tan il·lustres com els d'Antoni Rubió i Lluch, Jordi Rubió i Balaguer, Martí de Riquer, Miquel Batllori, Francisco Rico i Lola Badia, ha escodrinyat les característiques, extensió i caràcter de tal humanisme, i fins se n'ha qüestionat l'existència. La tesi de Butinà es fa explícita en l'obertura del volum: la lectura i enteniment de l'obra literària de Bernat Metge seria un dels cims més refinats de l'humanisme català, moviment o corrent intel·lectual que hauria gaudit de gran força i presència a Catalunya. L'autora, coincidint amb veus tan autoritzades com la de Batllori, creu en la presència i el cultiu de les idees, formes i tendències inequívocament humanístiques a la Corona d'Aragó sota els regnats de Pere III, Joan I i Martí I, i considera Metge figura imprescindible per a la difusió de tals idees, fins delà la corona d'Aragó: Metge és, "el primer autor de la Península que tuvo la feliz ocurrencia de expresar el nuevo talante en textos de intención literaria" (15). En el cas de *Lo somni*, Butinà eleva la seva lloança al màxim, il·lustrant-ho amb paraules de Batllori: és la primera obra pròpiament humanística de la Península Ibèrica en una prosa renaixentista perfecta (Batllori 30). Butinà explora el tarannà i l'abast d'aquesta peculiaritat literària de l'obra de Metge bo i seguint una metodologia de base comparatista (segons declara ella mateixa [19]) i, en darrer terme, homòloga amb l'objecte del seu estudi: "La vía de conocimiento que nos permite la lectura que ofrecemos de la obra metgia-



na no es otra que las fuentes literarias, por medio de las cuales estos humanistas construyen su lenguaje. Por lo que no dudamos en anclar aquí nuestro ángulo de observación" (15). Així la major part de les pàgines del llibre formen un examen minuciós de les fonts literàries utilitzades per Metge, llur procedència, filiació i, sobretot, la manera d'emprar-les i integrar-les en un tot d'ordre superior. El resultat d'aquest examen ens darà com a diagnòstic la filiació humanística de Metge i les seves obres. Des d'aquí, Butiñá declara, "el valor que pudiera tener mi aportación en cuanto a la obra literaria de Metge creo que se deriva precisamente de la sugerencia de fuentes y tratamiento nuevos, que dan pie a una lectura ideológica y moral de sus textos" (21), lectura que demostraria, segons l'autora, la pregonada contextura humanística de la literatura i pensament metgians.

Aquesta ressenya resultaria altament desproporcionada si s'hi discutís la propietat o impropietat de parlar d'humanisme català en fer referència a les lletres del quatre-cents (i darrers anys del tres-cents) a la Corona d'Aragó. Però sí que cal tenir presents les reflexions que fan els articles ja famosos de Badia i Rico sobre la qüestió, tot i que ens ajustarem a l'examen i a la crítica d'algunes de les idees i anàlisis que ens ofereix Butiñá.

Butiñá presenta el pla de la seva obra a les pàgines 20 i 21 de la seva introducció. (Per cert que en aquestes pàgines i altres del llibre s'hi troba un ús desconcertant de l'*ampersand* [&] on s'escauria del signe de paràgraf. Cal suposar una aberració informàtica malhauradament no detectada.) Primer hi ha un pròleg on l'autora estableix el seu compromís metodològic i historiogràfic sobre el tema; cal notar que Butiñá mateixa ens remet a la idea o concepte d'humanisme de la introducció del seu llibre sobre *Curial* (*Tras los orígenes* 17-19), cosa que deixa el lector un tant en dejuni d'explicacions i reflexions que sens dubte caldria explicitar. Tot seguit, Butiñá ens ofereix un esborrany biogràfic succint de Bernat Metge on posa en relleu la seva exposició primerenca sigui deguda als ambients curials de Barcelona, sigui a l'activitat intel·lectual del seu padastre, Ferrer Sayol a tot un seguit d'inquietuds culturals i literàries sempre relacionades amb els vents d'emulació i recuperació classicista que des d'Itàlia i, amb parada o de pas pel Migdia francès, feien entrada a la Península Ibèrica per la Corona d'Aragó (27-46). Després Butiñá examina la producció literària de Metge anterior a *Lo somni* cercant-hi evidències temàtiques, ideològiques i, sobretot, textuals que demostrin la seva filiació humanística (49-171), i en conclou la solidesa. L'obra de Metge que mereix més atenció en aquest estudi és, lògicament, *Lo somni*, a la qual dedica 240 pàgines denses tant tipogràficament com conceptual (175-415). Després d'aquest indubtable nucli de l'estudi, Butiñá examina la posteritat de *Lo somni* en un doble sentit: la continuïtat de les seves idees i posicions en l'*Apologia* del mateix Metge, i la seva petjada en obres i autors catalans del quatre-cents (Ausias March, Ferran Valentí, el *Spill* i el *Tirant* [419-34]). Diversos materials de caire pedagògic en línia amb la filiació acadèmica de Butiñá a la UNED i amb el fet que sigui aquesta institució qui ha editat el llibre clouen el volum amb guies per als investigadors com són ara la bibliografia del capítol 6, els textos del 7 i l'índex onomàstic.

El llibre de Butiñá és dens i una ressenya no pot donar-ne compte exhaustiu ni fer-hi totes les crítiques, elogis o objeccions possibles, ateses les afirmacions, judicis, estimacions i hipòtesis que s'hi proposen. La impressió global que deixa l'obra sembla la que, a escala diferent, deixa la lectura del capítol 2.2.4



dedicat al *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència*. Si amb aquest capítol ens trobem davant un *tour de force* per demostrar que tal obra comparteix, anticipa i mostra les característiques de la cultura literària humanística que Butiñá percep en *Lo somni* o en el *Valter e Griselda* cosa que a mi, amb l'òptima companyia de Riquer, em sembla força improbable (vid., per ex., Riquer 23) el conjunt del llibre fa la mateixa sensació d'esforç suprem per mostrar que el tot de l'obra de Metge és culminació temprana, però plena i vigorosa, d'un veritable i acomplert humanisme català que, capitanejat per Metge, poc tindria a envejar a l'humanisme italià quant a l'apropament als clàssics, cultura literària i perspicuïtat filològica. El problema rau, al meu entendre, que en cap moment queda provada ni amb arguments incontrovertibles ni amb paral·lels textuais ajustats ni amb evidència històrica irrefutable, la sèrie de vinculacions literàries i culturals que Butiñá planteja. I això no solament, com fóra d'esperar considerant la seva filiació literària característicament medieval, del *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència*, sinó també de la resta de la producció metgiana. Cert és que la cultura literària i les lectures de Metge apunten a una certa familiaritat amb la cultura clàssica que ja es revalorava a la península itàlica i al migdia francès pensem en Petrarca i en Avinyó, però això no en fan, de Metge, per molt que ens hi entestem (i això, insisteixo, és cabdal) un autor humanista ni fan de la seva obra una de les cimeres de la literatura humanística europea. Sembla, doncs, acabada la lectura del meritori esforç de Butiñá, que ens caldrà seguir acollint-nos a la línia crítica sobre l'humanisme català i l'obra de Metge que, partint dels treballs de Riquer, ens porta a contribucions més recents com les de Badia i Cingolani.

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MILTON, John W. *The Fallen Nightingale*. Edina, MN: Beaver's Pond Press, 2005. 608 pp.

Introduced as a "novelized biography" of the Catalan composer and pianist Enric Granados (1876-1916), Milton's book is rather a fantasy sustained on the chronological structure of Granados's forty years of life, a fantasy not slavishly attached to reality, but eloquent in its descriptions of places and events. The book is a bit prolix in its mention of characters that, even though related to the musician's life, the author does not quite manage to portray. Little of the existential or artistic importance of such personalities as Paderewsky, Kreisler, Cassadó, Mompou, and even Manuel de Falla seems to have mattered for Milton. Granados was a contemporary of Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909), another Catalan whose friendship he enjoyed. They were active during a period of great creative resurgence in the visual arts, architecture, literature, and music in Barcelona. Among many musicians few received as much international acclaim as did Albéniz and Granados, not even their teacher, Felip Pedrell (1841-1922), the far-sighted proponent of Spanish regionalism in music, above all in opera. This is established perfectly by Milton.

The light genre of *zarzuela* found favor with mass audiences; composers such as Bretón, Vives, Chapí, Moreno Torroba, Chueca, and others, composed *zarzuelas* with brilliance, style, and verve. This genre made for serious competition for Pedrell's disciples who strove toward the establishment of a "serious opera" based on Hispanic roots. Among these, this novel's protagonist, as well as Isaac Albéniz, competed with their rival Enric Morera (1865-1942). *Zarzuelas* elicited spontaneous applause from audiences in Madrid and Barcelona, and dominated the musical life in the Peninsula from the middle of the nineteenth century on, often stealing the show even from the most favored of Italian operas, by Verdi and Puccini. Curiously, Milton barely mentions the *zarzuela*.

Temporary exile in Paris by the composers of so-called "classical music" underscores the dissatisfaction they felt for the support that they received in Barcelona at the time. The same dissatisfaction affected the giants of painting such as Picasso, Miró, Dalí, and others. The fact that Fauré, Debussy, Dukas, Ravel, and also Monet, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Sisley, Munch, Cézanne, Matisse, and many others lived in the French capital made Paris more attractive to artists than their places of origin. Yet this is the time when the great Gaudí began transforming Catalan gothic and developed a unique language in architecture, a language that would come to be recognized world-wide as Barcelona's own.

Milton describes with precision the ambitious personality of Albéniz as a *bon vivant* and gourmet and contrasts it with that of Granados, even though the latter shows the burden of passion he poured into his music and shared with an intimate circle of students. The author of this novel establishes these personalities and shows his imagination in reviewing the many occasions in which both musicians got together at "Els Quatre Gats" or "Can Culleretes." To be noted is Milton's portrayal of the conflictive face-off of Granados and Albéniz with Morera when planning to establish a "Teatre Líric Català" that would compete with the foreign-friendly Liceu.

Granados's modesty and discretion is shown in his lukewarm efforts to garner for himself the recognition of the great artistic centers of Europe, unlike his compatriots Albéniz, Casals, Malats, Viñes, and others. Granados preferred to remain in Barcelona. At most he traveled to Madrid to view Goya's etchings and paintings in the Prado —the inspiration for his *Goyescas*—, to Puigcerdà to see his mentors and friends the Andreus, or to Tiana to visit Clotilde Godó, his student and eventual lover in whose villa Granados composed most of his piano pieces as well as his *Goyescas*. His devotion to his students at the Acadèmia de Piano on carrer Girona was interrupted by brief visits to Paris to see Casals or to accompany on the piano a virtuoso recital by Kreisler or Thibaud. He also traveled to Cambó-les-Bains to visit Albéniz in his death bed. His most far-flung journey took him across the Atlantic in 1916 to attend the premiere of *Goyescas* at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. On the return trip to Europe he drowned next to his wife Amparo when the S. S. Sussex was sunk by a German torpedo in the English Channel. Milton's description of this final event shows the novelist's vigor, having researched the testimonials of many who survived that tragedy. Milton adds that Granados had revealed to Clotilde that, after a childhood mishap in the Canary Islands, the composer had a foreboding of such an end, a confession later confirmed by a letter.

Milton refers to a number of Granados's disciples who earned repute in his days or just after his death. Among these are Paquita Madriguera —whose second marriage was to guitarist Andrés Segovia and Frank Marshall, born in Mataró to English parents, who succeeded Granados as director of the Piano Academy, a post later held by Alicia de Larrocha.

Among his early female disciples, Milton focuses on Maria Oliveró and María Ojeda as showing superior talent. These Marias stretched their condition as students to that of lovers well requited by their passionate teacher. Even though these affairs might not have been factual, they lend the novel color. The evocation of weekly lessons with Maria Oliveró, even though far from the eroticism that seems *de rigueur* in any narrative today, suggests that Granados had for his female disciples an attractiveness that went beyond his role as piano teacher. Maria Oliveró wrote Granados a string of love letters, which he kept among his sheet music on his piano. It was there that wife Amparo came by them and, as a condition for keeping his home and continuing to see his children, made Granados kick Maria Oliveró out of the Acadèmia, promise never to see her again, and suspend all performances, public or private, of the *Escenas románticas* for piano that he had dedicated to his lover. Later in life, as Amparo became aware of her husband's infatuation with Clotilde, she only asked him to "not dishonor me; we have six children who need both of us."

Such spousal confrontations are the most vivid scenes in a work that imaginatively circles a cluster of real-life events. A case in point shows Granados returning home through the labyrinth of Barcelona streets trying to avoid, futilely, both the police and the rebel strikers during the Setmana Tràgica of 1909. Granados is stopped by both sides and questioned. Milton renders his answers, which show his protagonist's sense of independence. Granados's proud replies compare with Goya's condemnation of violence and of the cruelty on both sides during the Napoleonic war, as seen in his *Horrores de la*

*guerra*. Milton emphasizes the parallel between Granados's musical compositions and Goya's *Majas*, as well as other correlations. With this, Milton sheds light on what drove Granados to compose his masterpiece, the two notebooks of *Goyescas* for piano, which gave rise to the opera of the same title.

In contrast with Albéniz, who responded to Pedrell's advice seeking his inspiration in folklore and in the cultural diversity of the regions of Spain, Granados looked to the traditions of a past that goes even beyond Goya's time: to medieval troubadour songs and then to the renaissance of such musicians as Francisco Guerrero, Cristóbal Morales, and Tomás Luis de Victoria. From all these, Granados wrought his own style, in the romantic-impressionist idiom of his time, the style that moves from Liszt to Debussy and Ravel.

With characteristic humor, Albéniz declared himself "a Moor" before his friends. The musicologist Ernest Newman, in contrast, described Granados as "a poet of the keyboard" and a musician who "fascinates by the fervor of his passion and the beauty and restraint of his classicism." One wishes that John W. Milton would have taken more time with such considerations; even within his purpose to write an entertaining novel, he could have evoked common friends and given them a voice with commentary of this kind. This would have doubtlessly helped put in sharper tones the musical depth of his protagonist's personality.

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MUÑOZ I PAIRET, Irene, ed. *Epistolari de Víctor Català*. Vol. I. Girona: CCG, 2005. 352pp.

Caterina Albert's *Obres Completes* (second edition 1972) contains her correspondence with major cultural figures of her day, such as Joan Maragall, Angel Guimerà, Narcís Oller, and Dolors Monserdà, but she also exchanged many letters with others. In the first of two planned volumes of previously unpublished letters, Irene Muñoz concentrates on the editorial world: Albert's two major editors over a long lifetime of writing were Lluís Via of *Juventut*, and Francesc Matheu, first of *Il·lustració Catalana* and later of *Catalana*.

An informative "Pròleg" by Jordi Castellanos situates the correspondence within its cultural context, pointing out some of the tensions among modernists like Via and traditionalists like Matheu: struggling for the same goal, they sought to reach it by different means. Both began their contact with Albert at the turn of the century, and both encouraged her to participate in their publications, repeatedly asking her for more of her work. In her introduction, Muñoz further describes the evolution followed by the writer and her editors, contrasting the open policy of *Juventut* with the more restrictive requirements of *Il·lustració*.

Between 1901 and 1909, crucial years in Albert's narrative production, Lluís Via wrote frequent letters to her. Unable to locate Albert's replies after

exhaustive searches, Muñoz here publishes 108 written by Via, in which he details business aspects of the contracts, mentions (with disapproval) the efforts of Carme Karr to establish "una revista *seria* para senyores" (98), and asks for more consistency in verb tenses. The most interesting letters are those that comment Albert's own works, especially the process of writing *Solitud*, published serially during 1904 and 1905. Here and throughout, the documentation offered by Muñoz is very detailed and bound to be helpful to those who would study the processes of writing and publication of this and other texts written during the period.

The 292 letters exchanged between Matheu and Albert are more complete both in their time span (1902-1934) and because we have most of Albert's replies, as well as a few letters from others involved in the journal and editorial house. This is truly a wealth of information, in which many aspects of cultural events are discussed: various "Jocs Florals," homages to other writers such as Maragall, Oller, Mistral, and Guimerà, and a description by Albert of the mosaics found at the ruins of Empúries, a matter in which she took a great interest. There are discussions of the works she submitted to both journals headed by Matheu, a search for certain words as the Institut d'Estudis Catalans was composing its dictionary, the transition between *Il·lustració catalana* and *Catalana*. On March 4, 1918, Albert mentions that she has started the composition of [*Un film*]: *3000 metres*, which would soon be published serially in *Catalana*.

Scholars of Caterina Albert's work and modernism in general can look forward to Muñoz's second volume, in which she will publish the next 400 letters that she has located.

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PAYNE, John. *Catalonia: History and Culture*. Nottingham, UK: Five Leaves Publications, 2002. 324 pp.

Readers of the *Catalan Review* are well aware of the inherent difficulties in defining our area of study. Indeed the identity, if not the entity, of the Catalan phenomenon is problematic. There is always the strong pull from Spain threatening to relegate the Catalan areas to a peripheral status as minorities. And then we must keep in mind the sneakier undertow of the series of circumstances summed up in the word "globalization". Furthermore the word "culture" might come to mean just about any human activity, and it probably does. Facing these constraints, John Payne has attempted the difficult definition of Catalonia and its culture and has done so with two added ambitions: his *Catalonia* encompasses discussion of completely up-to-date developments in just about any area of human endeavor, including frequent references to the 2004 Fòrum de les Cultures in Barcelona and discussion of the political agenda of the present Generalitat government under Pasqual Maragall. Payne writes from his English vantage point, viewing the claims (as he calls them) of nationalist historians critically. So here we have, at least in

conception, an up-to-date and independent book. Simply because of such an ambitious plan, Payne's *Catalonia* would be a welcome addition to any Catalanist's library, but the merits of book go well beyond its ambition.

Yet there is one limitation. Already on page 3 Payne alerts his readers that he will not discuss the Catalan-speaking lands in general —the Països Catalans— but rather just Catalonia (the area governed by the Generalitat de Catalunya), reasoning that “there is little indication of enthusiasm for the political project of a ‘Greater Catalonia’.” Clearly, then, political identity is central to Payne's conception of his subject matter. On the other hand it is important to note that Payne seeks to include serious consideration of the “other Catalans” brought to Catalunya by immigration, whether from Spain or elsewhere.

The book is divided into three roughly equal parts. The first, “A Sense of History,” offers a five-chapter summary of events from Antiquity to the aftermath of the Spanish War. (Payne refuses to call the 1936–39 conflict “civil war” because he sees it, and rightly so, as an international affair.) In the ninety or so pages of this section, Payne has opted to discuss a selection of decisive moments, rather than give a summary of events. He also brings in different moments of history to illuminate his conclusions, as when he views the antiquity of Catalonia through its survival or evocation in the *noucentista* imaginary. The general idea is to present an almost organic continuity leading to the present situation. The war of 1936–39 draws the most detailed discussion; here Payne engages in a dialogue with British writers who treated the event; most notably, George Orwell.

Part two “The Cultures of Catalonia” spans the scope of the book. It seems that there is no topic which Payne will leave unexamined, from debunking claims to a medieval happy coexistence of three cultures, to such things as the Pla Cerdà, Modernista architecture, José María de Porcioles, suburbs and urban renewal, the 1992 Olympics, film, *sardanes*, the Fòrum, folklore festivals, tourism, Carmen Amaya, Dalí, El Cant dels ocells, Dau al Set, the Assemblea de Catalunya. You name it, Payne has been there and reflects interestingly on it all, weaving relationships at once logically and surprisingly. Another strength of this book is that its viewpoints are decentralized; different issues as seen from different perspectives: tourism and the Costa Brava from Girona, ecological matters from Tortosa, cultural assimilation from Vilanova i la Geltrú. Barcelona to be sure, receives its due attention, but the city is by no means the defining locus of this work.

Part three, “Catalonia Today,” addresses issues of political independence, linguistic assimilation, and responses to globalization. It also delves even into details such as the role of football in Catalan identity and even muses on Beckham's decision to play for Real Madrid and not Barça. This part ends with a discussion of the role of Catalonia in the world. Overall, Payne paints a portrait of a nation that is balanced, original, and interesting. The final reflection, in the section entitled “Catalonia and the Minotaur” after a phrase of Jaume Vicens i Vives, is at once sober and hopeful. As the author explains: “I have criticized essentialism, preferring a view of the country that deals in the social and economic facts rather than with abstraction” (317). He also recognizes that “Catalonia today is not the Catalonia of the Republican period of the 1930s, let alone the Middle ages” and thus the “notion of returning to Catalonia its historical powers has been an illusion” (317). Yet “there is a



general recognition in Europe of the rights of nations to re-invent themselves as states if they so desire" (318).

Payne has produced an engaging, well-researched book written in a lively style. This *Catalonia* is an essay, rather than a scholarly work. Most of the authors mentioned therein wrote in English or have been translated into English. Clearly Payne had an international, as opposed to Catalan, audience in mind and seems dismissive of Catalan scholarship; his bibliography is a helpful list of the considerable amount of work in English on Catalonia. The author claims to have written "for the general reader" (1) though a press release from the publishers specifies: "Audience: general, tourist, academic." It is unfortunate that this excellent essay could not find a more prosperous publisher. While typos and spelling mistakes are infrequent, one misses an index, a map, and illustrations. A "general" reader who does not know where, say, Ulldecona lies would have found a map useful. I am certain that art historians will miss illustrations and without them might ignore the vibrant discussion of architecture that is one of the assets of the book. Academics who would assign the volume to students, or scholars who might want to respond to Payne's many engaging ideas would surely be helped by an index. I found the four categories into which the bibliography is divided to be more puzzling than anything else.

My only serious objections are, essentially, matters of packaging. I trust, however, that Payne's vibrant essay will be seen as compensating amply for such faults.

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PORTET, Renada Laura. *Rigau & Rigaud: Un pintor a la cort de la rosa gratacul*. Barcelona: Destino, 2002. 219 pp. *El mirall de Duoda*. Péronnas: La Tour Gile, 2003. 199 pp. *Una dona t'escriu*. Canet de Rosselló: Trabucaire, 2005. 102 pp.

In her two novels of 2002 and 2003, Renada Laura Portet takes on pivotal historical periods in her region of "Catalunya Nord." The one set earliest is *El mirall de Duoda*, in which she recreates the post-Charlemagne court intrigue while breathing life into the fascinating figure of Duoda, Countess of Barcelona and Duchess of Septimània, who lived and wrote during the first half of the ninth century. Composed in Latin, her work is a manual or "mirror" addressed to her son Guillem, who had been *encomanat* at the age of fifteen to the king's service. (I keep the original of this word, for it is quite loaded: *Encomanat* means "entrusted," but in this case it carries the meaning of "conscripted" or even "taken hostage" as security for his father's loyalty). To recreate this remarkable historical figure, Portet uses the fourteenth-century manuscript of the Biblioteca de Catalunya, more complete than the two versions found in French libraries. She also consults many other sources on Duoda's life and times, from dissertations to historical texts published by the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, among others. Duoda was a protégée of the Emperor and educated in the royal household, but after his death, during the



endless disputes among his sons, her husband and son were caught among conflicting loyalties and were both beheaded. Her *Liber manualis*, written between 841 and 843, contains advice to her absent young son on pious as well as courtly behavior and responsibilities and a good deal of information about herself. From these sources, Portet writes a wrenching life story, incorporating into the text a number of documents from the epoch. The lyrical prologue by Vinyet Panyella, then director of the Library, describes the beauty of the manuscript which long ago caught the attention and stole the heart of Renada Laura Portet: "guarnit amb capitals color de porpra / i el blau i el violeta entrellaçant / qui sap quins missatges enigmàtics entre la lletra clara" (V).

Centuries later, during just as intriguing a period, and as marked by attacks on the cultural hegemony of the region, a court painter from Perpinyà created over 2000 portraits of the rich and famous, including the iconic work of Louis XIV. Baptized Jacint Rigau shortly before the 1700 edict forbidding the use of Catalan, his brilliant career took him to Paris as a young man, where he lived the rest of his life under the name Hyacinthe Rigaud. Again, Portet uses all manner of historical documents to recreate the life of this talented man, whom she sometimes considers a *botifler* or traitor to the Catalan cause, but whom she also excuses for adopting the language and ways of the French court, on whom his livelihood depended. Among the many literary figures who formed part of that society, Madame de Maintenon stands out: she is the "gratacul" of the subtitle, "la belle Indienne" during her early days at Versailles, the "reina secreta" of Louis XIV, and after the death of the real queen, his "esposa morganàtica," recognized by all but not to inherit anything. Other figures of high society include her first husband Scarron, Saint Simon, Corneille, and Anne de Lenclos, with whom Madame had a brief tryst between her two marriages. Many historical details enrich this novelized biography, and again Portet intersperses fragments of official documents into her fiction, for example, the torture and execution of Teresa de Camprodon, countess of Foix and Bearn, at the hands of the Inquisition. In an interview, Renada Laura Portet says she doesn't know to what genre this work belongs, but readers will see descriptions that indicate the linguistic background of the author: "Ah, l'idioma de casa, bofegat a petapell (bon vent que tendeix les veles!) de tota una sobreabundància de vida, amb oclusives com pets de tro, líquides de cristall de festa major, vocals àeries voladores" (15). The book doesn't skimp on the eschatology surrounding His Majesty, and Portet often winks ironically at the intrigues and hypocrisy of the French nobility; at the same time she offers details, such as the price of a painting, which lend a realistic base to the story. Rigaud married late in life, but Portet suspects his affair with Elisabeth de Gouy began long before the demise of her husband; the documentation is that the artist helped his pretty young neighbor and her parents through various financial difficulties.

The third book, a collection of stories that won the "Premi Ramon Juncosa" in 2004, contains fifteen pieces of various lengths, styles, and tones. Several of the narrations are writerly in theme, much as Carmen Martín Gaité's *El cuarto de atrás* and some of the stories in Carme Riera's collection *Contra l'amor en companyia*. The protagonist of title story, for example, is an older woman writing to the baby Paulina, even though she cannot yet read. "El pou" shows a young man with writer's block staring into a well for inspiration

until, Narcissus-like, he falls in. The perhaps inevitable computer story, "L'ordinador amb cap de poma verda" is one of the most fantastic in the collection, and in "Una nit de lluna nova," jealousies and friendships among writers of different generations are portrayed with humor and mystery. Other themes and settings include Pablo Neruda and Chile of 1973, a nostalgic/erotic fantasy in a picturesque Massachusetts setting, the memoir of an old lady who finally liberates herself, a murder not so mysterious, loss of innocence as a result of a flasher whose member is "Com un braç de petota" in the eyes of the young viewer, and the invention of a young lover based on a passing hitchhiker by the not-so-young Senyoreta Elvira. And as usual in the work of Renada Laura Portet, there are many literary references, mostly to other Catalan writers. It is a pleasure to see the continuing production of this prolific spokeswoman of Catalunya Nord.

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